

On Monday, October 4, I made the following remarks at a press conference to celebrate FoundCare Health Center being recognized as the First Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Look-Alike in the State of Florida. The FQHC Program is administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the Department of Health and Human Services and designates health centers that provide essential primary and preventive health care services to low-income, medically underserved, and vulnerable populations that traditionally have limited access to affordable services and face the greatest barriers to care. The local nonprofit community health center is a prime example of how health care reform benefits local residents in Palm Beach County.

For more information on FoundCare Health Center, please visit: www.foundcare.org .

It is my distinct honor to welcome you to FoundCare Health Center, the first of its kind in Florida. I would like to thank FoundCare's Executive Director and CEO, Yolette Bonnet, for inviting me to speak on this momentous occasion.

In addition, I would also like to take this opportunity to recognize Rear Admiral Donald Weaver, Assistant Surgeon General and Deputy Associate Administrator for Primary Health Care at the Health Resources and Services Administration, Ms. Kerry Diaz, president of Quantum Foundation, and Mr. Andrew Behrman, President and CEO of the Florida Association of Community Health Centers. Thank you for all the hard work that you continue to do on behalf of our community and the health of our nation as a whole.

The designation of FoundCare Health Center as the first Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike in the State of Florida is a true testament to what can be achieved when you do the right thing: putting people, not politics, first. FoundCare's founders decided to do the right thing when they envisioned a state-of-the-art health care facility to serve all people, regardless of their ability to pay.

The sad reality is that more than a quarter million children and adults in Palm Beach County are

uninsured. To make matters worse, 60 percent of the uninsured are eligible for some type of insurance program but are not enrolled. It is unconscionable that so many families and individuals continue to suffer when help is available to them.

As a Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike, FoundCare's services are not only first-rate, but vitally needed. FoundCare provides essential primary and preventative health care services to those who might otherwise forgo medical care for themselves and their children. Furthermore, FoundCare helps individuals navigate the application process for Medicare, Medicaid, Florida KidCare, and other programs, and, together with Project Access partners, makes sure that patients can also access the specialty care they need.

I have had the privilege of being involved with this visionary project from the start and am continually amazed by the extraordinary dedication and compassion of the men and women who work here. Since it opened its doors in January 2009, FoundCare has provided access to quality health care for over 2,400 new, uninsured and underinsured Palm Beach County residents. Furthermore, when fully funded, FoundCare has the capacity for more than 10,000 patients per year. This is truly remarkable.

FoundCare's commitment to improving community health is an inspiration to us all. There is no doubt in my mind that, at this rate, it will soon become a Federally Qualified Health Center. As we celebrate FoundCare's tremendous success, I stand committed to supporting health care centers like FoundCare and working with my colleagues in Congress to ensure that health care is not a privilege for some, but a guaranteed right for all. Thank you.

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